the Prime Minister's recent visit to Moscow and the decisions arrived at;

(b) whether any decision has been taken on the debt settlement; and

(c) if so, what are the details and if not, what is the present status of the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Prime Minister's discussions with Russian leaders in Moscow were wide-ranging and prtductive. International and regional issues of mutual interest were discussed. Particular attention was paid to the development of bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, commercial, defence, science and technology and other fields. Declarations of the protection of the inerests of pluralistic states and on the further development and intensification of bilateral ties and a number of important documents covering tourism, science and technology, information technology, space, environment, standardisation, meteorology, and defence-related cooperation were signed. An understanding was arrived at on overcoming obstacles in the defence sector. It was also agreed to give particular focus to interaction in the field of culture.

(b) and (c) The Agreement on the Rupee-Rouble exchange rate for the debt repayments by India was signed during President Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993. The banking arrangements for implementation of the Agreement were finalised by September 1993. The modalities of the utilisation of the Rupee balances against debt repayments was discussed during Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. It was agreed that a 2-3 year perspective plan would be drawn up in respect of tea, tobacco, soyabean shoe upper and pharmaceuticals so that there is greater predictability and certainty of upliftment of these items from year to year. Rupee balances would be used for imports of Indian goods into Russia and for investing in agreed projects in India and Russia.

Foreign Ministerial talks on illegal imigrants upon India and Bangladesh

176. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to stats:

(a) whether the issue relating to the return of the illegal Bangladeshi immigrants was discussed during his recent talks with the foreign Minister of Bangladesh; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In April, 1993, External Affairs Minister while conveying our concerns stressed the need for stemming illegal immigration from Bangladesh into India. The Bangladeshi side noted this. The Joint Working Group comprising senior officials of both sides has since been tasked to recommend measures to resolve this issue.

Talks on sharing Ganga water between India and Bangladesh

177. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister held any talks with the leaders of Bangladesh during his recent visit to that country in connection with the SAARC summit;

(b) if so, the broad oucome thereof;

(c) whether the issue of sharing of Ganga water also figured in the talks; and

(d) if so, the oucome thereof?